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A Memorial  
of  
Sarah Ring Hibbard.

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1883.

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For the Library of  
Harvard College

From Geo. S. Hale











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IN MEMORY  
OF  
(*Hale*)  
SARAH KING HIBBARD  
(1822-1879)

WIFE OF  
HARRY HIBBARD  
OF BATH,

AND DAUGHTER OF  
SALMA HALE  
OF KEENE,

*By S. F. Worcester, and William L. Foster.*

NOT PUBLISHED.

<sup>v</sup>  
*Boston. 1883.*

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Gift of  
Geo. S. Hale,

*Press of Deland and Barta, Boston.*

## SARAH KING HIBBARD.

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At the Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Historical Society, held at Concord, on the 8th of June, 1881, it was

*“Resolved,* That Judges S. T. WORCESTER, of Nashua, and WILLIAM L. FOSTER, of Concord, be appointed to prepare a Memorial of the Late MRS. HIBBARD.”

The following sketch has been prepared, in accordance with this Resolve, and is now respectfully submitted.

A notice of the Collection of Historical Papers and Autographs, made by Mrs. HIBBARD, and presented to the Society in memory of her, has been prepared by the President.\*

\* Hon. CHARLES H. BELL.



Sarah King (Hale) Hibbard was born at Keene, N. H., Jan. 6, 1822. Her father, Salma Hale, a descendant of Thomas Hale, who came from Watton, in Hertfordshire, to Newbury, Mass., about 1637, was the editor, at the age of eighteen, of an influential newspaper; afterwards, a member of Congress from his native state of New Hampshire, the author of a well-known history of the United States, an early and earnest supporter of education and temperance, and the freedom of the colored race, a man of taste, scholarship and cultivation, and the first president of this society. One of his female ancestors was a sister of the heroine, Hannah (Emerson) Dustin, of Haverhill.

Mrs. Hibbard's mother, Sarah Kellogg (King) Hale, was a descendent of a Connecticut family long resident in Suffield; whose grandfather's brother, after honorable service in the old French war, died a captain of a Connecticut regiment, on his return from the capture of Havana in 1762. She was a woman of great taste and culture, of marked intellectual gifts,



beauty, attraction, and social charm. Mrs. Hibbard was educated at Keene, at the school of Miss Catherine Fiske, widely known in its day, and at those of Alexander Urquhart and Solomon P. Miles, in Boston.

She was married, on the eighth day of August in the year 1843, to Stephen Rowe Bellows, of Walpole, a grandson and namesake of Stephen Rowe Bradley, who represented Vermont in the Senate of the United States from 1791-95, and from 1801-13. Mr. Bellows died on the seventeenth day of March, 1844. Subsequently his widow resided in Walpole and with her father, in Keene, until the 13th of May, 1848, when she was married to Harry Hibbard, of Bath, N. H. Mr. Hibbard was for many years an active and leading member of the democratic party, speaker of the House and President of the Senate of New Hampshire, for six years a member of Congress from that State, and a lawyer of high rank and reputation at its bar, who received from his political opponents, in 1871, the compliment of an appointment to its supreme court.

After Mrs. Hibbard's marriage she resided at Bath. During Mr. Hibbard's active life and residence at Washington, his wife shared and contributed to the

social enjoyment of the varied and brilliant society of the capital. Their child, Alice, died at an early age ; and, after her husband's service in Congress, they resided in Bath, where he devoted himself to his profession. Mrs. Hibbard was constantly with him during the sessions of the courts to which his business called him, and familiar with his professional associates and the social and active life of the bar. Recently, among other subjects, she was interested in aiding the president of this society in his sketches of the New Hampshire Bar. After Mr. Hibbard's death, on the 28th of July, 1872, she sought occupation and enjoyment, largely in the pursuits to which her own literary taste, as well as her inheritance and early associations, attracted her. She engaged with much interest and assiduity in the study of the history of her native State, and collected many interesting documents and memorials of its eminent men, which might have been effectively used by her in some systematic composition, if a longer life had permitted this.

She left a large collection of historical materials, which have been arranged and deposited in the archives of this society as a memorial of one " whose taste and success in the cultivation of antiquarian studies

was very remarkable and worthy of being commemorated." She was a woman of refined taste, wide reading and cultivation, accurate and thorough information, remarkably free from pretence, a singular lover of truth, of a cheerful and sunny temperament, patient and uncomplaining under affliction, always unselfish, and ever thoughtful of others,—as much so of the poor and solitary who received her secret benefactions, as of the nearer friends who did not need them : rarely even impatient, never angry or bitter and without enemies to look for faults which did not exist. In a memorandum book found among her papers she had noted shortly before her death these sentiments, which seem singularly descriptive of herself :

“ When any one has offended me I try to raise my soul so high that the offence cannot reach me ” :—

“ To dread above all things bitterness and irritation ; never to say, or indirectly to recall anything to my own advantage ; never to be pleased with anything I say myself or press my point ; always to begin by doing that which comes to me hardest, unless the easier duty is a pressing one.”

She was not large in stature, but of graceful carriage. Her countenance was enlivened by bright, dancing dark eyes ; her hair, dark ; her complexion,

delicate and clear; her mouth — and “cherry lips,” mobile and sensitive; her expression, one of mingled piquancy, vivacity and tenderness, softened in later life by sorrow with depth of feeling and memories of the past; and, until time and grief had wrought their work, she “never,” as Carlyle said of his wife, “ceased to be the prettiest and gracefulest of little girls, full of intelligence, of veracity, of vivacity, and bright curiosity.”

Mrs. Hibbard died very suddenly, at her home in Bath, in the morning of the 5th of October, 1879. At her funeral, on the 7th of that month, the Rev. Wm. O. White, for twenty-five years the pastor of the Unitarian church, in Keene, which her parents assisted in founding, and where she worshipped for many years, made the following remarks:

“This bounteous autumnal sunlight, so emblematic of the radiant spirit of our vanished friend, as it floods the home and the valley which she loved so well, seems to whisper to us, ‘Be of good cheer.’

“Just such an atmosphere of peace was rayed forth from her countenance, as she moved among you.

“Her innate modesty, her shrinking from aught that savored of publicity, bid us refrain from dwelling upon those traits in her character which so endeared her to

her friends. In obedience to such a ruling spirit of truthfulness, it became her ever-present purpose to be, rather than to seem.

“ Her love of nature was abundantly gratified in this cherished home of hers, beneath these clustering hills and on the banks of this rushing stream.

“ There are those present who remember her as the light and joy of her parental home at Keene. They can testify to the welcome which a person of such marked natural gifts would have received, had she been pleased, after her recent widowhood, to return to her native place, and to continue, in the second generation, the same charming and graceful hospitality which they had witnessed in the home of her childhood.

“ But the heavy shadow, as it fell upon her home here, which seemed to make such a step possible, only transfigured this beautiful village in her eyes. Here, in Bath, were the friends who had so honored and loved the husband to whom she was so long and so tenderly attached ; the friends who had rejoiced in his distinction, and who soon taught her to feel that they could never cease to love her, not only for her own sake, but for his.

“ In their sudden grief, and in that of her surviving

kindred, let it not be forgotten that she has escaped all possibilities of decline and weariness by this going as 'in the twinkling of an eye' into the new life beyond. Let us follow her, as she passes on into the intervening darkness, as we call it, with her lamp trimmed and burning. So, with her heart filled with love to her fellow beings, and kindled with faith in her Saviour and her Heavenly Father, let us leave her with the angels, in whose fellowship she now is."

At her grave he repeated these lines:

"Here, in an inn a stranger dwelt,  
Here joy and grief, by turns, she felt,  
Poor dwelling! Now we close the door,  
The sojourner returns no more.

Now of a lasting home possessed,  
She goes to seek a deeper rest,  
Then open to her, gates of peace!  
And bid the pilgrim's journey cease."

The village choir sang the hymns beginning:

"There is a calm for those who weep,"

"Dear as thou art and justly dear."

And her remains were deposited by those of her husband and daughter, in the village cemetery at Bath. A monumental cross of red granite marks the

spot, with the fitting inscription from Longfellow's "Golden Legend":

For thee a step into the open air  
 Out of a tent already luminous —  
 With light that shone through its transparent walls.  
 Oh! Pure in heart!

Death was to her only "a step into the open air," and the gentle light of heaven shone through her mortal part in her sweet and thoughtful patience, her serenity of temper, her love of truth, and her unselfish life.

Some extracts from the expressions of appreciation, sympathy and sorrow, by the friends who knew her best, are an appropriate termination for this brief sketch. To them we leave the description of a character which her life disclosed rather than displayed.

An intimate and dear friend of her parents, as well of herself, says, "I wish I could say anything worthily of Sarah. To me she was a very rare person intellectually. The fidelity of her nature was so complete that all her mental acts were expressions of it. She had a justice which was more than a sense of justice. Like her father, she had the thing itself, and her knowledge was just what one would look for from such a brain. She was always exact in her facts, in

her dates, in her inferences, and she always tried to go back to causes. I never knew any woman whose historical data were so uniformly correct. She never allowed a superficial statement to have even a lodgment in her mind, and I do not believe she ever held an opinion which was unfair, and yet she was not aggressive, as these right people almost always are.

"She had accumulated a mass of facts of natural history, as well as general, all well methodized too.  
\* \* \* \* \* Oh! \* A light went out of this world when Sarah went. She was so simple, so unworldly, and so much more of a thinker than most people recognized! \* \* \*

"No new scientific discovery ever found her indifferent, and no new thought failed to arouse a response. I say all this because I love to, but if I were to fill one sheet after another it would be nothing new to you who knew her so well, and it would fail to say to you all I found in her so noble and so true. As W. B. said, 'We always believed Sarah Hale.'

"With her sweet ways, her loving heart, her rare unselfishness of nature \* \* \* \* \* I have never known her to do, or say, or think, an unworthy word or thought, and she had far more ability than the present generation of flippant talkers even compre-



hend—always just, always true \* \* \* always sincere and genuine.”

A teacher of her youth, and friend of her later life, wrote, “A character I so greatly admired and which has been growing upon me from her early school days. True, there have been periods when I did not see her for several years, but when we did meet I felt that she had been gaining all the while. She was so thoroughly honest, truthful and just; while she discriminated clearly, she was ready to see the good points in every character, and of these was far more inclined to speak than of any fault or defect. Her quick sympathy with all classes, young and old, learned and unlearned, was a prominent trait, and gained her the love and esteem of persons in every walk in life. Her interest and intelligence on many and diverse subjects made her an agreeable companion.”

Another near friend says, “I wish I were able to write something worthy of her, the memory of whose life it is so pleasant to recall. Judge Worcester informed me of the action of the Historical Society last June, with which I was much pleased. \* \* \* \* \* I remember well with what pleasure we looked forward to the semi-annual visits which she made us, as it was her custom to accompany Mr. Hibbard when

he came to attend the courts of Grafton County, holden in Plymouth, his delicate health rendering her presence necessary. When he returned home at the close of the day, worn with excessive mental labor, her cheerful countenance and her pleasant voice welcomed him, and with her remarkable conversational powers she entertained and refreshed him. Her perfect sympathy in whatever interested him was always noticeable. For his associates of the bar, and his clients, alike, she always had a pleasant word, and her memory will long be cherished by those who met her on these occasions.

“ Her pleasant, genial manner endeared her to the hearts of all with whom she was associated. Possessed of a retentive memory, keen observation, and rare social accomplishments, she was always an acquisition to the homes of friends and strangers alike. With a modesty for which she was remarkable, she imparted her knowledge of historical events, of which voluminous reading and a retentive memory afforded her a rare fund. Her dislike of incorrectness upon matters of historical interest was remarkable, her own desire for correctness upon such points fully attesting this. While possessing a mind well stored with the history of the past she was also well read in matters of most interest to the pres-

ent. She won the hearts of all by her kindness, her consideration and her charity. While differing from others in matters of opinion, she, nevertheless, respected, and allowed perfect freedom to those from whom she differed. She revered age and respected honest poverty — such ever found a welcome at her hospitable board; the memory of her it will always be pleasant to recall, for whom once having formed a friendship, it was lasting until the end of her well-rounded life. \* \* A wise counsellor and a true friend.”

“ During the latter part of the life of her worthy husband, Hon. H. Hibbard, of Bath,” says one of his friends and associates, Judge Nesmith, “ on account of his feeble health, Mrs. Hibbard almost uniformly attended the several terms of the court, ministering kindly to his wants; we often met at our common boarding-house \* \* Again, after the death of her husband, she took occasion to consult me in relation to some of her pecuniary and business affairs.

“ We thus had full opportunity to form a correct estimate of her character, embodying the good qualities of her mind and heart. In her were united a mild and cheerful temper, good native abilities improved by much culture, derived especially from a very extensive knowledge of historical and literary subjects. Upon

topics of this character her conversation was always interesting and instructive, and we have occasion to know that the pages of some of our best newspapers and periodicals were frequently enlivened by the efforts of her genius and pen. These productions, together with some of her letters that we have seen, evince much good taste and sound judgment, and do honor to the head and heart that produced them."

"I never saw her angry," said one who knew her from the cradle to the grave.

And thus, in various terms, other friends of her youth and age, whom we need not separately name or describe, express the impression her life and character had left upon them, and the love and admiration she had unconsciously won.

"Only the memory left of a character which the closest insight showed brighter and brighter — rarely bright, and brave, and true, and honorable, affectionate and sincere."

"Every one has loved her for her real goodness.  
\* \* \* Her father and she were the two most honest, true, guileless persons I have ever known."

"It would be impossible for the sun to catch the sunshine of Sarah's face. It was peculiar. A good painter alone could do it, and not all of the best either."

"She was so lovely, intelligent and sweet in her little, winning manner, one could not but love her."

"From her babyhood up, she was always very attractive to me. I can see her sweet checkerberry mouth and her dancing dark eyes, and I know how much quiet courage and strength there was in her to do and to suffer—what patience and loving faithfulness!"

"How pleasant is that memory of my earliest school days when, having lost my own little sister, Sarah one day told me she 'would take me to school and she would be my sister,' and day after day she took my hand and led me up the hard, steep stairs at Miss Fiske's school, and past the savage boys at the school house, safe thus far on my lonely way home. She was one with whom every one who knew her will now recall just such cherished associations and incidents, and as the news of her death brings back to each the goodness and tenderness of her nature, these little pleasant things, and greater things too, will 'shine out through memory's amber,' embalmed, and sacred, and permanent. So it will be with every one of the innumerable company of her loving friends."

"How pretty she was! so bright, so piquant, so winning, so lovely her coloring, so rich and luxuriant

her hair, so petite and pretty her figure, so affectionate her pretty ways, so bright her repartee, so fascinating her naïveté. In later years, when I had grown to be her companion and friend, I always loved her,—and there was so much to love in her. I never knew a more modest person in her own opinion of her attainments, nor one whose intelligence and culture were broader. Never did I hear a subject mentioned with which she was not familiar, but, without she felt at perfect ease in her surroundings, never would one suspect her knowledge; but give her the feeling that she was with those who loved to hear her talk, and soon we would discover that more than any present was she familiar with the subject under discussion. \* \* \* \* \*

How frankly she would tell me of her life—never of her own bravery in meeting many and oft-repeated trials; never of rebellious or questioning murmurings of the justice of her afflictions; never of the hardness of her solitary life, but always with cheerfulness and courage, and a deep interest in what she could do for others. More thoughtful of others than most persons, of the little things, the little kindnesses and favors that make up happiness here, she gave out herself largely to those she loved, and was made so very happy by the loving tenderness of others. \* \* \* \*

Sweet, tender soul! Each day she comes before me, so fresh, so frank, so cordial, and no one else is like her, or ever will be. \* \* \* Mr. L. called her 'a diamond, so clear, so pure, so bright, so sparkling.'"

"I shall always remember her as the sweet, attractive, smiling girl who brought sunshine wherever she went."

"There was something so attractive and winning in her manner that even strangers were drawn towards her."

"She was a true and faithful friend, both in joy and sorrow."

"She was beloved by all. She lived so quietly, so unostentatiously, that only her friends knew her really—her remarkable attainments, her rare worth, her wonderfully well-stored mind, her power of appreciating wit and intellect, and everything beautiful in art as well as nature; her discrimination of true and false, her abhorrence of all insincerity. So upright and true herself, she looked for it always in others. Her unselfishness, her bright, sunny, cheerful disposition, all, all her lovely traits, we must recall and try to imitate."

"No one will be more deeply mourned than Mrs. Hibbard, for 'she loved much.' Wherever grief and poverty dwelt her loving hands and kindly words

were ever ready to aid. And she always felt the tenderest sympathy for the sick and suffering, and having endured so much affliction herself, she was able to succor and aid others. \* \* \* \* When a young man from the village died two or three months ago, under similar circumstances to her departure, she said, 'it is the death I should prefer to all others, excepting for the shock it would give my friends.'"

"Every one mourns for her, every one loved her. \* \* \* For Mrs. Hibbard's neighbors were in truth her relations, and we all mourn for her as for a dearly-loved sister who always sympathized with us."

"I do not think anybody who did not see Sarah Hibbard's house in Bath, and the general admiration and respect which everybody in that region felt for Mr. Hibbard, and for Sarah, too, could at all realize what a pleasant life she led."

"I remember her as always kind, cheerful, unselfish, affectionate, happy herself, from her own natural goodness of heart, and doing her best to make others so; \* \* \* The sweet cheerful face which dwells in my mind among the brightest recollections of my younger days."

"I have no associations of impatience or irritability, or love of display, or a spirit of exaggeration, or even



an impression of despondency or discontent. \* \* \* Quiet simplicity and cheerfulness seemed to characterize her bearing, combined with animation and playful humor."

"Sarah was, I think, the most uniformly amiable character I ever knew. Never did I hear an impatient word from her. Never did I see an unpleasant look upon her face. \* \* I could not write of any other one of my early friends with such genuinely kind and regretful feelings as of Sarah Hale."

"I think of her sweet, gentle ways, of her readiness to be interested in all which interested us, and feel that the world is colder that she is gone out of it."

"For the memory of her friendship is one of the sweetest that I have."

"Whose whole life was a benediction, and whose memory is like the perfume of flowers."

"To know Mrs. Hibbard was to love her."

## THE HIBBARD PAPERS.

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The collection of manuscripts made by Mrs. Hibbard, and presented to this society by her brother, Hon. George S. Hale, of Boston, is in many respects so remarkable that it deserves more than a passing notice.

Mrs. Hibbard possessed rare advantages for obtaining autograph letters of value. Her father, her husband and her brother, have all occupied public positions, and have been in relations of friendship with many of the prominent persons of their generations, extending over a period of more than half a century. Their correspondence was a mine of literary wealth. Mrs. Hibbard herself had an extended acquaintance among the cultivated historical and antiquarian students and collectors of the country; and every one who knew her was only too happy to aid her in her pleasant task of gathering autographic memorials of the notable people of our own and of past generations. She had a quick eye and a wonderfully retentive

memory, and was thus enabled to rescue a multitude of papers of interest from forgotten receptacles, which would otherwise have become the prey of the mildew and the mice.

And thus, in a few years, she formed a collection of manuscripts which will well reward careful examination and study, some as mere curiosities, but many for their literary or historical merit. She enjoyed the work of gathering them, and took real pleasure herself, and afforded much gratification to her friends, in the exhibition of her treasures. And now they have come into the possession of our society, not only valuable materials for the special work for which we are associated, but fragrant with the memory of the gifted and cultivated and kindly lady who passed so many pleasant hours in bringing them together.

The collection contains about two thousand papers, which have been assorted and handsomely mounted in four bulky volumes, at the expense of Mr. Hale, the donor. The first two volumes, and a part of the third, are devoted to autographs, chiefly letters; the remaining portion of the volumes is occupied by historical papers relating to New Hampshire towns, and to the province and State; to the War of 1812, and to the Revolution; together with various miscellaneous documents. The

whole will be suitably indexed for facility of reference. The limited time at my command will necessitate only a brief mention of the more remarkable contents of the volumes. The first of the series was completed and presented to the society at our last annual meeting, and some brief account of its chief attractions was then given.

That volume is rich in the manuscripts of those who have held high position in literature, in art, in social and in political life. It deserves a much more minute and detailed notice than it has received or than can be given it at this time. I cannot refrain, however, in passing, from directing special attention to the letter of Mrs. Abigail Adams, the wife of John Adams, upon the death of Washington, written at the time, and expressing, in the style of an educated and sympathetic woman, the feelings which pervaded the thinking and reflecting class of the community, at the loss of the father of his country. Nor should I forget the letter of Thomas Jefferson, written to Mr. Salma Hale, and explanatory of the writer's religious opinions, which were the subject of much bitter speculation and comment three-quarters of a century ago, but at this day would hardly be deemed sufficiently heterodox to demand a special paragraph.

Of the manuscripts contained in the other three volumes, one of the most noticeable features is the large number of literary productions in the hands of their authors. There are poems, or parts of poems, in the manuscript of Park Benjamin, Lewis J. Cist, E. F. Ellett, Mary Gardiner, Hannah F. Gould, Charles Fenno Hoffman, Alice G. Lee, Henry W. Longfellow, George P. Morris, Frances S. Osgood, T. Buchanan Read, W. Gilmore Simms, E. Oakes Smith and Henry T. Tuckerman.

There are also prose stories or sketches by T. S. Arthur, Caroline Gilman and N. P. Willis; while there is a sheet covered with the minute but legible script of Oliver Wendell Holmes, relative to homœopathy, uncomplimentary of course; and some of the manuscript of William H. Prescott, believed to belong to one of his Spanish-American histories.

No small number of other *authors* are represented by autograph letters; as, Joel Barlow, George W. Bethune, Alexander H. Everett, Thos. Green Fessenden, Peter Force, Convers Francis, Henry William Herbert, T. Starr King, B. J. Lossing, Herman Ludewig, Isaac McLellan, Jr., Grenville Mellen, Samuel L. Mitchell, J. G. Palfrey, Epes Sargent, Caroline M. Sedgwick, L. H. Sigourney, Seba Smith, Wm. B. Tappan, Royall Tyler.

Of signers of the Declaration of Independence, and statesmen of the early days of the republic, we find manuscripts of Josiah Bartlett, Chas. Carroll of Carrollton, Geo. Clymer, John Dickinson, Benjamin Franklin, Elbridge Gerry; Hamilton, Jay and Madison, authors of the Federalist, John Hancock, Henry Laurens and Thomas McKean, presidents of the Continental Congress, and Chas. Thompson, its faithful secretary; Francis Hopkinson, Jared Ingersoll, Gouverneur Morris and Robert Morris, the financier of the Revolution, John Morton, Geo. Ross, James Smith, Mathew Thornton, William Whipple and James Wilson — the last six all signers of the Declaration.

Of statesmen and cabinet ministers of later times, we find represented here: Wm. Bradford, Jr., John C. Calhoun, Lewis Cass, Salmon P. Chase, Caleb Cushing, A. J. Dallas and George M. Dallas, John H. Eaton, Albert Gallatin, John McLean, Wm. L. Marcy, Timo. Pickering, Richard Rush, Charles Sumner, Oliver Wolcott, Levi Woodbury, besides others who will be specially noticed.

Military men are not neglected, for we find of that class: Jeffrey Amherst, John Armstrong, the elder and the younger, Timo. Bedel, Henry Dearborn, Horatio Gates, Edward Hand, Moses Hazen, Wm. Irvine,

John Mc Niel, Thos. Mifflin, James Miller, Peter Muhlenberg, Enoch Poor, Wm. Prescott, Joseph Reed, Eleazer W. Ripley, Robert Rogers, Philip Schuyler, Winfield Scott, John Stark, John Sullivan and "Mad Anthony Wayne."

There is also a considerable group of notabilities who do not strictly come under either of the foregoing heads; such as John Jacob Astor, Duke of Bedford, Thos. Ewbank, Sir Henry Fox, Robert Fulton, T. H. Gallaudet, Joseph Henry, Joseph Hopkinson, S. G. Howe, C. J. Ingersoll, King John of Saxony, Tobias Lear, Dolly P. Madison, Duke of Newcastle, Chas. Wilson Peale, the painter; Sir Wm. Pepperell, Thos. Ritchie and David Rittenhouse.

Besides being thus rich in names outside New Hampshire, the collection shows the author's State pride in the very large list of names it contains of men of note whom we have a right to claim as our own by virtue of their birth or residence here.

There is nearly a complete series of the governors of the province and the State, mostly in the form of commissions or other official documents; also a very large proportion of the judges and members of both houses of Congress, and prominent men in our constitutional conventions, in the executive council and in the legislature.

There are five autograph letters, or papers, of Daniel Webster in the collection. One is an invitation to Mr. Hibbard to dine, July 11, 1850, and dated two days previously. In the meantime the death of President Taylor occurred, and the dinner was given up for that cause, Mr. Webster then holding the office of Secretary of State; and we have Professor Haddock's note to Mr. Hibbard, written at the request of Mr. Webster, to announce the fact.

Another of Mr. Webster's letters is addressed to his cousin, Worcester Webster, to procure the discounting of a note to pay a debt of the former; and another, by a singular coincidence, is to his son Edward, referring to pecuniary difficulties of *his*. Mr. Webster wrote sometimes for the press; and one of these autographs is a political communication, or rather editorial, two columns in length, for a Washington newspaper.

There are several letters of Franklin Pierce, mostly upon political subjects. One, however, is a letter of introduction of Mr. Hibbard to Nathaniel Hawthorne; and there is also a sheet of memoranda in President Pierce's manuscript, made evidently on the day after Hawthorne's sudden death, in relation to the latter's state of health for a little time before. It appears that



Pierce had noticed paralytic symptoms and mental sluggishness, indicating an affection of the brain, in his friend, for some time prior to the final attack.

Among the curious documents is the original autograph proclamation of Gov. De Witt Clinton, of N. Y., offering a reward of \$1,000 for the discovery of William Morgan, who was understood to have been recently abducted by the Free Masons; and \$2,000 for the detection and conviction of his murderers, if he had been made away with, also, promising a free pardon to any accomplice who should make a full confession and disclosure of the principal murderer.

Jared Sparks is represented by three letters to Mr. Salma Hale. Being from one historian to another, they naturally treat of subjects connected with their common calling. A portion of one of Mr. Sparks' letters is specially interesting to us, because it apparently conflicts with Mr. George Bancroft's views that the French ministry endeavored during our Revolution to corrupt members of the American Congress—notably Gen. John Sullivan of our own State—for the purpose of inducing them to accept terms of peace with Great Britain, without insisting that the right of fishery should be secured to this country. Mr. Sparks expresses himself so positively on the point of the en-

tire good faith of France, and has made so full examination of authorities, that his opinion is well worth preserving.

He says, under date of Dec. 3, 1845: "I have read, in the French offices, the entire correspondence of the French Court with their ministers in the United States, and their ambassadors in Spain, from the beginning to the end of the war, to the very close of the peace, amounting to more than fifty volumes; and, also, in the offices in London, the entire correspondence of the British Commissioners during the negotiation of the treaties; and the instructions and letters of the secret agent that went twice from Paris to London during the negotiations; and I am persuaded that no nation ever fulfilled its pledges more scrupulously, or acted with better faith, than did France toward the United States, from the first to the very last. I *know* that the suspicions of Mr. Jay, which figure so largely in his correspondence, both in Spain and in Paris, and which have given the tone to our history, were utterly groundless. I should desire no easier task than to show them to be so in detail. I speak with confidence, because I certainly have gone to the bottom of this matter."

There are two letters here from Gov. William Plumer, both on historical topics. The Governor was

strongly in favor of a new edition of Belknap's History of New Hampshire, the text to stand unaltered, and all corrections, etc., to be made in notes. He thought there should be a continuation added, beginning, not where Belknap ended, in 1790, but at a point some years anterior; for the reason that many of the actors in the Revolution, and in subsequent events, were alive when Belknap wrote, so that he did not express his opinions respecting them and their conduct with the freedom which a historian should employ.

Three years after this letter was dated, Farmer's edition of Belknap made its appearance, which followed, so far as it went, the method suggested by Gov. Plumer; but it was unfortunately never completed.

It is rather a curious circumstance that, while Gov. Plumer states in this letter that he himself had at one time contemplated editing a new issue of Belknap, there is another letter in this collection from Mr. Jacob B. Moore, dated a dozen years later, and of course nine years after Farmer's edition had appeared, which discloses the fact that Mr. Moore had collected the materials for a new edition of the work, and was *then* ready to put it to press as soon as he could obtain six hundred subscribers.

If we add to this the well understood fact that

Judge C. E. Potter, at a still later period, contemplated re-issuing Belknap, and made more or less preparations therefor, we shall have the verdict of those who have perhaps devoted as much time to the investigation of New Hampshire affairs as any, in favor of the text of our favorite historian, as the most suitable foundation whereon to erect a more complete historical edifice.

The "snapper," at the end of Gov. Plumer's letter, is a remark of John Adams to a foreigner, "that without a knowledge of newspapers, no man could write a good history of this country," a sentiment that we shall all subscribe to, no doubt.

Among the documents in the collection which relate to the early affairs of the province, is the original draft of a statute dated in 1721, and levelled at the unlicensed sale of intoxicating liquors, the preamble of which is as applicable to human conduct in our own time as to that of a century and a half ago, and will bear repeating. It is in these words: "Forasmuch as there are several tippling houses in the province that privately sell strong drink without license, and are so very private in it that it is hard to make proof of the same." Our temperance friends make the same complaint to-day.

From another original legislative bill we learn that up to 1725 the sitting of the General Assembly and holding of the courts of justice had been "at a common inn or tavern," as no public building for such purposes was owned by the province; which was justly alleged to be "not only a dishonor to the Government, but attended with inconveniences too well known to need a mention"; wherefore a committee was proposed "to consider and make a plan for the said house and report it to the General Assembly for their approbation, in order to their choosing a committee to agree with workmen to build the same."

It is gratifying to know that the council passed the bill, although the lower house did not concur; so that the building of a state-house was postponed to a more convenient season.

Another scrap from the early legislation of the province is an act of the General Assembly, passed in 1693, making provision for the first post-office here, and for the conveyance and delivery by post of "letters and pacquets" under the authority and power of Thomas Neal, Esq., who had received a patent from their excellent majesties (William and Mary) therefor.

But I have not time to dwell upon the various matters of interest upon which these papers bear. A couple

of documents refer to the "Vermont Controversy," when the Connecticut Valley evinced a disposition to slough off from New Hampshire and cast its fortunes with the Green Mountain State, or some portion thereof. One very formal document, which may possess an interest for some mousing antiquary, is a schedule, most bountifully authenticated, of sundry tracts of land lying about Lake Champlain — eleven in number — which were the property of Col. Philip Skene, a loyalist in the American Revolution, and for the loss of which he was compensated by the British government.

There is here, also, a considerable number of depositions, taken during the Revolutionary contest, upon complaints made against persons as "enimical to the liberties of this country." They show how jealous the friends of liberty were of every word and act that might afford aid and comfort to the public enemy; and they show, too, that there was, at least in the earlier stages of the contest, a real division of sentiment among the people even of our own province, in regard to the rightfulness and feasibility of resisting the power of the mother country.

I have not observed a strict chronological order in noticing these papers, and I cannot forbear, before

closing, to go back a few years, in order to mention two or three others which possess a peculiarly sad interest. They are statements, bearing the signatures of James Johnson and Susanah, his wife, who were "captivated" at Charlestown, No. 4, by the Indians, in 1754, containing a full though brief account of their hard experience. A narrative of Mrs. Johnson's captivity was published in a volume near forty years later, but the statements in these papers were contemporaneous, and afford a fresher and more vivid picture of the occurrences. One fact is disclosed in them, which does not appear in our printed version of the provincial papers, and which is too creditable to the humanity of our fathers to be omitted—that the General Assembly of the province made, in 1755, a large appropriation, considering the poverty of the people, (£300 it is believed), for the redemption of New Hampshire citizens who were then captives in the hands of the savages.

Take it all in all, the Hibbard collection of manuscripts, besides affording many objects to gratify the taste of the student of antiquities, and of the curious, in the matter of handwriting and the correspondence of persons of mark, is a substantial and useful contribution to the materials for the history of New Hampshire.

In these days monographs and special histories contribute greatly to the elucidation of controverted questions of conduct and motives. The present method is to put everything under the microscope, and so bring out all the minute points which determine the character of equivocal acts. The facts and reasons that were given to the public are not always the true facts or the controlling reasons. In this sense some portions of our history may justly be characterized as "a story agreed upon."

But the desire of the historical student of our time is to learn the true inwardness of things, no matter how many cherished myths it may dispel, no matter how many reputations it may make or break. The ideal historian will expose all shams, prick all bubbles, and tell things exactly as they are and were. And for the purpose of obtaining the means for complete and accurate information, in order to form a correct judgment, we need to explore the private not less than the public sources of information. John Adams' remark about the newspapers was true; but the newspapers do not contain all that we want, or need to know. Private writings, and journals, and diaries — contemporaneous memoranda that were not meant for the public eye, letters written in the unrestrained



freedom of friendly intercourse — these have been found to supply the missing links of many a chain of historical cause and effect, otherwise incomplete and untraceable.

Here the work of the antiquary and the collector come in, to supplement and complete the materials of the historian. We gladly welcome to the library of our society every acquisition of manuscripts which shed a ray of light upon any point of history. And we are especially grateful for an accumulation so extensive, so various, and in many ways so important, as that which was formed by the literary taste and judgment and historical knowledge of the lady whose name will always be associated with this collection.





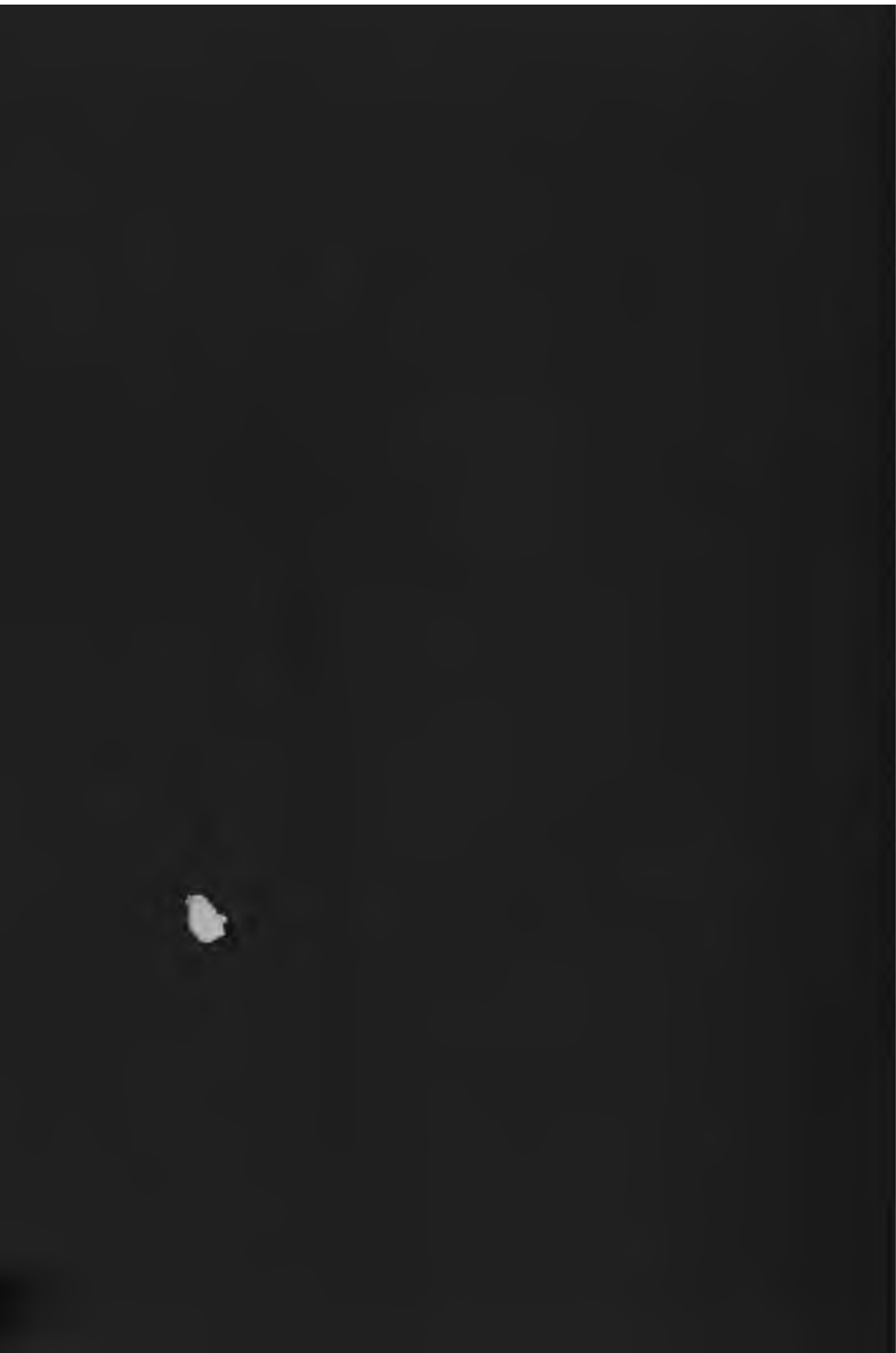






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